



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **RMTC BOARD FORMS COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE IMPLEMENTATION OF DTI TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Moving forward with its initiative to significantly change the structure of drug testing in U.S. horse racing, the Racing Medication and Testing Consortium (RMTC) board of directors has approved the formation of a committee to oversee the implementation of the Drug Testing Initiative (DTI) Task Force recommendations on quality assurance and laboratory accreditation programs for U.S. horse racing drug testing laboratories.

The board took this action at its meeting in Louisville, Ky., on September 29, 2009.

Named to this committee, chaired by Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association CEO Alan Foreman, were RMTC board members:

- Gary Carpenter, American Quarter Horse Association executive director of racing
- Dr. Robert Lewis, past president of the American Association of Equine Practitioners
- Ed Martin, president of the Association of Racing Commissioners International
- Dan Metzger, president of the Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Association
- Terry Meyocks, national manager of the Jockeys' Guild
- Dr. Gregg Scoggins, Magna Entertainment Corp.'s national director of regulatory affairs
- Dr. Scott Stanley, UC Davis associate professor
- Kent Stirling, Florida HBPA executive director
- Mike Tanner, executive vice president of the United States Trotting Association
- Mike Ziegler, executive director of the NTRA Safety and Integrity Alliance

At the board meeting, other integrity issues were also discussed in depth, including the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs) and how they may affect pre-race examinations by regulatory veterinarians. Dr. Tom David of the Louisiana State Racing Commission and chairman of the ARCI Racing Regulatory Veterinarian Committee explained the examining veterinarian's concern over current NSAID and corticosteroid policies. The RMTC Scientific Advisory Committee was previously charged with the task of reviewing all existing research on NSAIDs, particularly phenylbutazone.

Dr. Larry Soma of the University of Pennsylvania recently prepared an extensive report and has concluded that "based on scientific reports and the impression of clinical veterinarians, residual effects of phenylbutazone remain at 24 hours."

The RMTC Scientific Advisory Committee has identified several options for consideration in future recommendations on the administration times and threshold concentrations for NSAIDs. California Horse Racing Board Equine Medical Director Dr. Rick Arthur explained that several states are participating in a study to evaluate NSAID concentrations in blood at the time of pre-race examinations. The Scientific Advisory Committee will assess this data and make a final recommendation at the next RMTC board meeting.

The RMTC previously announced that it was conducting research on corticosteroids commonly used in racing and the board was updated on the status of that project. A copy of Dr. Soma's report and Dr. David's comments can be obtained at the RMTC website ([rmtcnet.com](http://rmtcnet.com)).

In other RMTC business:

- Dr. Rick Sams of the University of Florida Racing Laboratory presented to the board a report on administration studies for a number of commonly used therapeutic medications that often result in medication infractions. Dr. Sams also announced that the administration studies on anabolic steroids are complete and a recommendation on a model rule for testing in plasma for these medications has been submitted to RCI. Administration studies that are nearing completion of sample analysis are acepromazine, butorphanol, detomidine, glycopyrrolate, lidocaine, mepivacaine, methocarbamol and pyrilamine.

“RMTC anticipates that by early next year, it will be in a position to make recommendations for threshold levels and/or withdrawal times on these medications,” said RMTC Chairman Dr. Robert Lewis. “Most therapeutic medication infractions are simple management mistakes. Our hope is this information will help veterinarians and trainers avoid these common rule violations.”

This announcement was met with appreciation by Florida HBPA Executive Director Kent Stirling. “Horsemen will be glad to see that we are finally going to have thresholds and withdrawal times for these medications,” said Stirling. “The withdrawal times database on the RMTC website is extremely helpful but shows the inconsistencies in withdrawal times recommended by state racing commissions and veterinarians. The recommendations out of these research studies will certainly help to bring about uniformity, which is a primary mission of RMTC and something that horsemen desperately want to see realized.”

- The RMTC board also approved the formation of a Communications Subcommittee to make recommendations on a media campaign to better explain the significant efforts of the drug testing laboratories in detecting prohibited drugs, and differentiate those findings from the more prevalent positive laboratory reports for overages of approved therapeutic medication that are primarily mistakes in administration times and dosages.

“Judging from the media reports and comments on many blogs, it is clear that many reporters and particularly racing fans do not understand that an overage of flunixin does

not rise to the level of an attempt to illegally affect the outcome of a race, and there needs to be a better system to communicate and differentiate racing stable staff management errors from attempts to drug a horse in order to win a race,” said RCI President Ed Martin.

- RMTC’s DTI Task Force, which is funded in large part by The Jockey Club, announced that applications for the graduate/post-doctoral research fellowship program are being mailed to university-affiliated laboratories by October 1. Funding from RMTC is available for one person, with the respective university matching costs. The RMTC board previously committed \$75,000 per year for three years for this program. Applications are due January 1, 2010, and an offer will be made April 1, following the review process. This program is intended to develop the next generation of horse racing laboratory directors and researchers.
- RMTC is also actively seeking applications for the new position of Director of Research and Accreditation. The job will involve coordinating administration studies designed for the development of uniform threshold levels and withdrawal times for the regulation of therapeutic medication, analyzing data produced from those studies and producing a final written report for distribution to the Scientific Advisory Committee, assisting principal investigators with publication of administration studies in peer review journals, and coordinating the development of an RMTC/RCI laboratory accreditation and quality assurance program, among other duties. A complete job description can be found at [rmtcnet.com](http://rmtcnet.com). Applications are being sought immediately with the intention to fill the position before the end of the year.

Mike Tanner of the United States Trotting Association appreciated the progress that RMTC board members made at this crucial meeting.

“We covered a good amount of ground Tuesday and have targeted some very important issues, especially uniform medication and testing protocols,” he said. “Now it’s just a matter of getting to that point. There’s still a lot of work to be done, but I think we’re all on the same page and I’m encouraged by the steps that are being taken.”

The RMTC, which is based in The Jockey Club’s Kentucky office, consists of 25 racing industry stakeholders and organizations that represent Thoroughbred, Standardbred, American Quarter Horse and Arabian racing. The organization works to develop, promote and coordinate, at the national level, policies, research and educational programs that seek to ensure the fairness and integrity of racing, the health and welfare of racehorses and participants, and to protect the interests of the racing public.

For additional information, visit the RMTC website at [rmtcnet.com](http://rmtcnet.com) or contact Hallie Lewis, RMTC director of communications, at (859) 224-2848.